APR. 2-5, 2008

Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association

Executive Notes

Your Provincial Executive Council met in St. John's on April 2 and 3, and Joint Council (Branch Presidents and Provincial Executive) met on April 4 and 5. This issue of *Executive Notes* is a summary of major decisions and discussions that occurred at these meetings.

For further information contact any member of Provincial Executive or the NLTA staff person as indicated.

President's Report

President Sean Noah reported on his activities since the January meeting of Provincial Executive. He has presented NLTA's brief to the Pre-Budget consultations, attended the Beginning Teachers' Conferences in Corner Brook and Gander, took part in the Opening Ceremonies for Education Week 2008 via video conference with schools in Labrador, attended retirement banquets and socials for various branches of the NLTA, met with officials at the Department of Education on the NLTA's response to the ISSP/Pathways Commission, and attended numerous other meetings and events in his capacity as President. He was active in the media on violence in schools, Education Week, assessment/wait lists by guidance personnel, student supervision, salary scale comparisons, teacher allocations and the math curriculum review. He also visited several schools in St. John's and the Mount Pearl area as well as in Deer Lake, Corner Brook, Lewisporte, Glenwood and Conception Bay South.

For further information contact Sean Noah, President.

Collective Bargaining

Provincial Executive reviewed the draft opening proposals for collective bargaining. These opening proposals were accepted by Provincial Executive with changes noted. A schedule for negotiating sessions will now be pursued with the Collective Bargaining Division of Government. As soon as opening packages are exchanged at the bargaining table, a series of branch meetings will be scheduled throughout the province to share the opening proposals with all teachers.

For further information contact Sean Noah, President or Lloyd Hobbs, Assistant Executive Director.

Teacher Allocation Report

A presentation was made to Provincial Executive on the Teacher Allocation Commission Report and Government's response by Perry Downey, Benefits and Economic Services Division and Beverley Park, Professional Development Division. This presentation reviewed the NLTA's input into the commission's work, the commission's proposal, comparison tables and a review of issues as identified by the NLTA that were not addressed. The draft of the NLTA response to *Education and Our Future: A Road Map to Innovation and Excellence*, the Report of the Teacher Allocation Commission, was accepted by Provincial Executive with changes as noted.

A timed session was also held with Mr. Bob Gardiner, Director of Evaluation and Research and Mr. Eldred Barnes, Director of Program Development with the Department of Education. This session provided Provincial Executive with the opportunity to ask questions about the Teacher Allocation report and to have a number of points clarified. As well, Mr. Barnes took the opportunity to review changes to the math curriculum and answer questions from Executive.

For further information contact Sean Noah, President or Edward Hancock, Executive Director.

Business of Standing Committees

Table Officers

- The November 2008 Executive and Joint Council meeting dates were changed to November 27 for Executive and November 28-29 for Joint Council.
- The Association will nominate Sean Noah for the office of Vice-President of CTF for 2008-09.
- The Association will nominate Dr. Edwina Wetzel for the CTF Outstanding Aboriginal Educator Award for 2008.
- A communiqué will be sent to administrators and teachers and an article prepared for *The Bulletin* giving highlights of the Teacher Allocation Commission Report and the new teacher allocation model.

For further information contact Sean Noah, President or Edward Hancock, Executive Director.

Membership Benefits and Services Committee

- Seven pre-retirement seminars will be held in accordance with Association Policy during the fall of 2008 in the following locations: Corner Brook, Gander, Grand Falls-Windsor, Stephenville, and three in St. John's. The dates and sites will be determined by the Benefits and Economic Services Division subject to hotel and presenter availability. Consideration will be given to combining seminars depending on registration numbers.

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- Leo Freeborn of the Rameaux Branch will be the recipient of the Bancroft Award for 2008.
- Elizabeth Murphy of the Rushoon-Terrenceville Branch will be the recipient of the Special Recognition Award for 2008.
- Bill Chaisson of the Humber Branch will be the recipient of the Allan Bishop Award for 2008.
- At the Fall 2008 meeting of Joint Council, information will be provided to Branch Presidents regarding the preparation of nominations for Association awards.

For further information contact Tina Ryan-Matthews, Chair, Membership Benefits and Services Committee, or Stefanie Tuff, Benefits and Economic Services Division.

Professional Issues Committee

- The Barnes Award winner for 2008 will be Keith Adey.
- The Professional Issues Committee will conduct a study of teacher preparation time practices/variances throughout the province with the view of providing the findings to Executive for future action.

For further information contact Jean Murphy, Chair, Professional Issues Committee or Beverley Park or George Tucker, Professional Development Division.

Communications/Political Action Committee

- The proposed policy on privacy was accepted by Provincial Executive.

For further information contact Gabe Ryan, Chair, Communications/Political Action Committee or Lesley-Ann Browne, Communications Officer.

Other Business

- The NLTA will communicate to school district directors the Association's concern that the role of itinerant teachers appears to be changing from the direct service to students to more of the traditional role of program specialists.
- The Association will liaise with the Faculty of Education regarding the evaluation procedures for teacher interns and the Professional Issues Committee will consider developing an Association policy on teacher interaction with interns.

For further information contact Sean Noah, President or Beverley Park, Professional Development Division.

JOINT COUNCIL

Association Priorities

A detailed review of the Association priorities for 2007-09 was presented to Joint Council. Various NLTA administrative staff updated Provincial Executive and Branch Presidents on elements of the priorities including action updates and progress to date. The priorities are: quality of teacher work life/teacher workload; contract negotiations; teacher professional development; membership involvement/awareness; and Teacher Allocation and ISSP/Pathways Commission Reports.

Detailed presentations on the Teacher Allocation and ISSP/Pathway Commission Reports were made to Joint Council by various administrative staff and members of Provincial Executive. The presentations included Government's response to the Commission Reports, comparison tables of the NLTA's submissions and the accepted recommendations, as well as a review of issues as identified by the NLTA that were not addressed.

For further information contact Sean Noah, President or Edward Hancock, Executive Director.

Teacher Health and Wellness Promotion Program

A presentation was made to Joint Council by Don Ash, Benefits and Economic Services, and Manuel Ball, Coordinator of the Teacher Health and Wellness Promotion Program, on the various elements of the project. At the direction of Provincial Executive a Teacher Health and Wellness Promotion Program has been developed with funding from the NLTA Group Insurance Trustees. Manuel reviewed the activities to date and the timeliness for the upcoming pilot project. Some examples of program activities include on-site fitness activities, development of personal exercise/training programs; consultation with dietitians/nutritionists; biometric testing (e.g., cholesterol, blood pressure, etc.); monthly/seasonal/special occasion activities; and stress management workshops.

For further information contact Lloyd Hobbs, Assistant Executive Director or Manuel Ball, Teacher Health and Wellness Program Coordinator.

Group Insurance Annual Renewal

A presentation was made to Joint Council on the Group Insurance Annual Renewal by Don Ash from the Benefits and Economic Services Division. The presentation reviewed decisions of the NLTA Group Insurance Trustees on increases to premiums, a comparison of current versus new rates, a review of Government contributions, and the impact of Government contributions to the rate setting process.

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For further information contact Don Ash, Benefits and Economic Services Division.

CTF Programs and Services

A presentation was made to Joint Council on the programs and services of the Canadian Teachers' Federation by Emily Noble, CTF President and John Staple, Deputy Secretary General of the CTF. The presentation included information on the three-year priorities for CTF; national issues; international issues; networking and advocacy activities; teaching and learning conditions; and how CTF is a voice for teachers and an advocate for public education. The CTF is a national bilingual organization with 16 member organizations and one affiliate. It represents 220,000 teacher members across Canada.

For further information contact Sean Noah, President or Edward Hancock, Executive Director.

Are Our Teachers Safe?

A presentation was made to Joint Council by Dr. Lynda Younghusband on her recent research findings. Some of the major themes generated from her analysis of the qualitative data were: fear; intimidation and threats; the impact of abuse/violence; a perceived inadequacy of support; and concern for teachers' safety. Joint Council had the opportunity to ask questions of Dr. Younghusband around her research findings.

For further information contact Sean Noah, President.

Policy Changes Since the 2007 BGM

A number of changes in policy statements since the 2007 Biennial General Meeting were approved by Joint Council. These policies provide direction for continuity of decisions and guidance to those who take positions on behalf of the Association The amended policies include: voting procedures on provincial package; electoral committee at BGM; Bancroft Award; Allan Bishop Award; election of the President and Vice-President by province-wide vote; employee assistance program; French programming; student equity grants program; pre-retirement counselling; environmental; privacy; curriculum; textbooks; length of Kindergarten day; and Johnson Inc. bursaries.

For further information contact Sean Noah, President or Edward Hancock, Executive Director.

Cyber Conduct and Electronic Communications

A presentation on Cyber Conduct and Electronic Communications was made to Joint Council by Stefanie Tuff from the Benefits and Economic Services Division. The presentation reviewed the benefits and advantages of electronic communications; concerns and risks for teachers; advice for best practices; what educators need to know about cyber bullying; and a question and answer session for Joint Council.

For further information contact Stefanie Tuff, Benefits and Economic Services Division.

Discussion Topics/ Branch President Topics

The following topics were discussed by Provincial Executive and/or Joint Council for possible follow up or future direction: school lockdown procedures; discretionary leave; teachers' right to speak out about school closures; investment of salaries under the deferred salary leave program; primary and elementary student profiles; banking time; department head allowances; sick leave; pensions; and professional development.

For further information contact Sean Noah, President.

Other Business from Joint Council

- The following ISSP/Pathways issues will be discussed with the Department of Education:
  - possibility of providing a web-based FAQ sheet for ISSP/Pathways issues;
  - concerns relating to scribing and reading examinations for students formerly classified as Pathway 2.
- A memo will be forwarded to primary teachers informing them that the "bubble sheets" for the primary reading assessments will be optional for the June assessments.
- The Curriculum Committee will be asked to follow up with the Department of Education regarding concerns relating to curriculum guides for French Immersion, i.e. courses not ready when expected to teach, guides not available and inadequate P.D. time.

For further information contact Sean Noah, President.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of Provincial Executive is scheduled for **June 6-7, 2008** in St. John's.

For further information contact Sean Noah, President or Edward Hancock, Executive Director.